

The Effect of TikTok Use Intensity on Moral Disengagement of Senior High School Students with Self Control as Mediator Variable

Trigasi Ayu Carina Yudha, Andik Matulesy, Amanda Pasca Rini

Universitas 17 Agustus 1945 Surabaya, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to ascertain how self-control, as a mediator, affects the degree of TikTok use and moral disengagement. Quantitative research methodologies are used in this work. Surabaya City high school students made up the study's population. Nonprobability sampling combined with incidental sampling is the method of sampling that is employed. A scale was employed in the data gathering method. The traditional assumption test and path analysis are the methods of analysis employed. The results showed that the self-control variable was unable to mediate the effect of the intensity of using tiktok on moral disengagement, self-control with moral disengagement did not have a significant relationship, the intensity of using tiktok with moral disengagement had a significant relationship, and the intensity of using tiktok with self-control had a significant relationship. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of educational psychology, especially theories regarding moral behavior and self-control in a digital context.

Keywords: *TikTok, Moral Disengagement, Self Control*

Corresponding author

Name: *Trigasi Ayu Carina Yudha*

Email: *1522200003@surel.untag-sby.ac.id*

INTRODUCTION

Morals have a vital role for students in social life. However, researchers still find many phenomena that indicate a student's behavior is not based on moral values, such as: brawls, committing acts of violence, being disrespectful to teachers, free sexual behavior, to the latest news that is currently viral in the archipelago, namely the persecution of a student against a teacher who caused the teacher or the victim who was persecuted to be hospitalized due to stab wounds (Habsy et al., 2023).

Based on the results of preliminary studies that researchers conducted through the process of observation and interviews with Guidance and Counseling teachers in several high schools in Surabaya City, researchers found the phenomenon of adolescents who violate school rules intentionally on the grounds that many others do. There is still information from the community around the school that finds junior high school, high school and vocational school students or the equivalent still often skipping school during active school hours. Some students seem to show a permissive attitude towards morally

unacceptable actions, such as cheating on exams, speaking harshly to friends, or even committing acts of verbal or non-verbal bullying.

In the interviews, some students admitted that these actions are often considered normal in the school environment, especially if they are done by many classmates. One student stated that cheating is considered a "survival strategy" amidst academic pressure, while another student mentioned that teasing or crude jokes against friends are only done for entertainment without serious intentions.

Observations also showed a tendency to rationalize unethical behavior with certain reasons, such as assuming that the teacher was not paying attention so that the cheating would not be noticed, or that the victim of bullying did not seriously respond to the treatment. In some cases, students who commit unethical acts tend to shift responsibility to other parties, such as blaming the situation or calling the behavior a spontaneous reaction to pressure from the environment.

Interviews with teachers also revealed that this phenomenon is often difficult to detect because students tend to behave differently in front of teachers than among themselves. Teachers also stated that social media, including TikTok, also influences the formation of students' attitudes and behavior, especially through the normalization of content that blurs the boundaries between right and wrong behavior.

Other behaviors that violate moral rules are the existence of dating behavior outside the boundaries of reasonableness, the behavior of disrespecting teachers and other adults. Based on the results of unstructured interviews with adolescents who often commit violations, they mentioned that they do this because many of their friends do the same thing and are not punished or not sanctioned. These cases illustrate moral disengagement behavior.

Moral disengagement is a cognitive mechanism in individuals to find logical reasons so that unethical and immoral behavior can be logically justified. Moral disengagement is a form of selfish behavior that goes against our own principles without feeling bad (Mulyani, Cahyanti, and Thamrin, 2024). Individuals who seek to logically justify this guilty behavior are called moral disengagement (Rahmawati et al., 2024).

Moral disengagement as a psychological phenomenon, of course, its appearance can be influenced by many variables. One of the variables that can affect moral disengagement is the intensity of use of TikTok social media. Frequent or continuous use of the TikTok application will cause intensity of use. An individual action that is performed often while including emotions or motivated by a sense of enjoyment is known as intensity of usage (Yanica, 2019). Activities that provide the person performing them with a sense of fulfillment or joy are what create intensity, which leads to repetition and an increase in intensity. The increase in Tiktok usage is increasing due to the ease of access and video creation in the application (Derianto & Qorib, 2018).

The high intensity of teenagers in accessing TikTok makes them complacent and even forget about time. A person is said to be normal in accessing TikTok for less than 3 hours per day with a small frequency of 4 times in a day when accessing TikTok (Rahayuwati, L., Permana, R. H., & Labertha, 2019). When the intensity of TikTok use in adolescents

exceeds normal limits, it will be easier to be exposed to information that can change adolescent behavior.

Previous research found that there are various negative impacts of using TikTok such as addiction or difficulty regulating the intensity of TikTok use, lazy learning and decreased learning achievement, and narcissistic behavior (Gupta et al., 2021; Rahmayani, M., Ramdahani, M. & Lubis, 2021). In addition, the study also found that creative freedom on TikTok encourages teenagers to do anything for content. This can be seen from excessive movements such as dances that show body shapes for Muslim women, showing aurat, and creating content in places of worship, harsh words and hate speech, indecent or pornographic content, and the existence of challenges on TikTok that can endanger the lives of users such as blocking a moving truck (Suryatmojo, 2019).

The negative impact of the intensity of TikTok use can cause moral disengagement for adolescents. Therefore, self-control is needed by adolescents in using TikTok. Self-control is the individual's ability to override or change internal responses, inhibit unwanted behavioral tendencies, and refrain from committing these actions (Tangney, J. P., Baumeister, R. F., & Boone, 2014).

Some studies have found that adolescents tend to have low self-control, so they may spend more time using social media and forget about other more useful activities (Kurnia, S., Sitasari, N. W., & Martin, 2020). Other studies have also shown that adolescents' difficulty in regulating the intensity of their TikTok use can cause problems for themselves and others (Gupta et al., 2021). In addition, adolescents with low self-control may engage in hate speech against fellow users and even hate speech against religion and the state. Suryatmojo, "Bengkulu student who insulted Palestine on social media expelled from school."

In contrast to low self-control, adolescents with good self-control will consider carefully whether their actions will hurt or harm others and themselves (Paramithasari, P.P., & Dewi, 2023). Good self-control in adolescents can inhibit the tendency for unwanted behavior when using TikTok, and refrain from doing something that harms themselves and others (Marsela & Supriatna, 2019). In previous research it was also found that self-control acts as a moderating variable in reducing moral disengagement in 152 adolescents in Australia (Nebioglu et al., 2012). Based on the description above, the researcher is encouraged to conduct more in-depth research related to the effect of the intensity of TikTok use on moral disengagement with self-control as a moderator variable.

METHOD

This study uses quantitative research methods. The population in this study were high school students in Surabaya City. To determine the size of the research sample, you can use the Isaac and Michael sample size determination table. Based on Isaac and Michael's table, the number of samples in this study amounted to at least 349. The sample obtained was 356 students. The sampling technique used is nonprobability sampling with accidental sampling technique, namely the method of determining the sample by taking respondents who happen to be there or available somewhere in accordance with the

sample criteria, namely active high school students in Surabaya City, owning a smartphone, and having an active TikTok account. The data collection technique uses a scale.

Table 1. Operationalization of TikTok Usage Intensity Variable

No.	Variables	Aspects	Indicator
1	TikTok Usage Intensity	Quality	Attention
			Comprehension
2		Quantity	Duration
			Frequency

Table 2. Moral Disengagement Variable Operationalization

No.	Variables	Aspects	Indicator
1	Moral Disengagement	<i>Cognitive restructuring</i>	Considering reprehensible acts to be natural
2		<i>Minimizing agency</i>	Not responsible for the occurrence of misconduct
3		<i>Distortion of negative consequences</i>	Ignoring the consequences of despicable behavior
4		<i>Blaming/Humanizing the victim</i>	Blaming the victim and attributing the misconduct to themselves (the victim)

Table 3. Operationalization of Self-Control Variables

No.	Variables	Aspects	Indicator
1	Self-Control	Behavior Control	a. Ability to modify circumstances
			b. Ability to organize stimulus
2		Cognitive Control	a. Ability to consider circumstances
			b. Ability to assess the situation
3		Decision Control	a. Decision-making ability
			b. Ability to choose an action

Validity and reliability tests are used to test measurement devices. The purpose of the validity test is to assess the validity of the questionnaire statement items. A comment that reveals anything that is assessed on the questionnaire, in Ghozali's opinion, is indicative of a legitimate questionnaire. Validity and reliability tests using SPSS 21 with a level of significance = 5% on 341 respondents with the correlation score between items and questions with the total variable score is a way to measure validity by comparing the calculated r value with the r table for the degree of freedom. Decision making to test validity is when $r_{count} > r_{table}$ and positive or significant < 0.05 then the statement item or indicator is declared valid. A Cronbach's Alpha score greater than 0.60 indicates that the data is

trustworthy. A reliability test measures the consistency of the questionnaire, which is an indicator of a variable or construct (Ghozali, 2018).

The analysis techniques used are classical assumption tests and path analysis. The classic assumption test consists of normality test and linearity test. In this study, the tool used to analyze data is to use path analysis. According to Ghozali, the hypothesis will be accepted if the significant value is <0.05 and the regression coefficient is in line with the hypothesis. Hypothesis testing of the effect of mediation can be done with a procedure developed by Sobel and known as the sobel test (Sobel, 1982). The sobel test is done by testing the strength of the indirect effect of X to Y through M.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

RESEARCH RESULT

Classical Assumption Test

The normalcy test in this study was conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov technique in SPSS software. The significance value (p-value), which shows the test's findings, indicates if the data is regularly distributed if the p value is greater than 0.05. Based on the results of the normality test conducted, the research data shows a normal distribution. This is indicated by a significance value that is greater than the specified significance level ($p > 0.05$). The test results show that the significance is 0.159. This result indicates that the data is not significantly different from the normal distribution. Thus, the assumption of data normality is met, which is one of the important prerequisites in regression analysis.

The purpose of the multicollinearity test is to make sure that the independent variables in the regression model do not have a linear connection with one another. The multicollinearity test in this study was conducted using SPSS software, examining the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance value. The criteria used to identify multicollinearity are $VIF < 10$ and Tolerance value > 0.1 , which indicate the absence of multicollinearity.

Based on the results of the multicollinearity test conducted, no multicollinearity was found among the independent variables in this study. This is indicated by the Tolerance value which is above 0.1, which is 0.949 and the VIF value which is below 10, namely 1.053 for all independent variables. This condition indicates that the linear relationship between the independent variables is not too strong.

Path Analysis

The following are the results of the path analysis test:

Table 4. Inderect Effect Results

				Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p	
X	→	Z	→	Y	0.020	0.023	0.875	0.382

The results of the mediator analysis show intensity and morale through self-control, obtained a value of $z = 0.875$ with a significance of $p = 0.382$ ($p > 0.05$). This means

that the self-control variable is not able to mediate the influence between the intensity of using tiktok and moral disengagement.

Table 5. Results of Path Coefficients

			Estimate	Std. Error	z-value	p
Z	→	Y	0.062	0.070	0.888	0.375
X	→	Y	0.302	0.085	3.556	< .001
X	→	Z	0.319	0.062	5.179	< .001

The results of the analysis show a direct relationship between self-control and moral disengagement, obtained a value of $z = 0.888$ with a significance of $p = 0.375$ ($p > 0.05$). This shows that self-control and moral disengagement do not have a significant relationship.

The analysis results show a direct relationship between intensity and morale, obtained a value of $z = 3.556$ with a significance of $p = 0.001$ ($p < 0.05$). This shows that the intensity of using tiktok with moral disengagement has a significant relationship.

The analysis results show a direct relationship between intensity and self-control, obtained a value of $z = 5.179$ with a significance of $p = 0.001$ ($p < 0.05$). This shows that the intensity of using tiktok with self-control has a significant relationship.

DISCUSSION

This study aims to examine the role of self-control as a mediator between the intensity of TikTok use and moral disengagement. The results of the analysis show that self-control is not able to function as a significant mediator in the relationship between the two variables. Based on the results of path analysis, the z value obtained is 0.875 with a significance p of 0.382, which means $p > 0.05$. This finding indicates that the relationship between TikTok usage intensity and moral disengagement cannot be substantially explained through self-control.

One of the theories that serve as a framework in this study is the self-control theory developed by Tangney, Baumeister, & Boone (2014), which states that individuals with high self-control have the ability to control urges and impulses that can harm them or others. According to this theory, individuals with good self-control should be better able to withstand the negative impact of activities such as social media use, thus preventing moral disengagement. However, the results of this study show that despite the increased intensity of TikTok use, self-control is not enough to reduce the tendency of individuals to morally disengage from existing norms.

This result is in line with previous research which shows that self-control is not automatically able to overcome the negative impact of social media use. The use of social media such as TikTok has a fairly strong influence on moral disengagement, and self-control plays only a minor role in intervening in the process (Puspitasari and Fikry, 2023). The intensity of social media use, which often involves exposure to morally questionable content, tends to trigger moral disengagement behavior without relying too much on individuals' ability to control themselves.

Another relevant study examined the impact of social media use on moral disengagement and showed that the intensity of social media use has a direct impact on moral disengagement, without relying heavily on self-control as a mediator (Astuti and Andrini, 2021). These findings suggest that other factors, such as individual personal characteristics, social context, and motivations for social media use, influence the relationship between social media use and moral disengagement tendencies.

In addition, these results also reinforce the views of the dual-process model theory, which explains that there are two cognitive processes that work together in influencing behavior: automatic processes and controlled control. The Dual Process Model theory is an approach that explains the existence of two main cognitive systems that play a role in the decision-making process and human behavior: the automatic system and the controlled control system. The automatic system works based on experience, intuition and heuristics that allow individuals to make decisions quickly and spontaneously, while the managed control system involves slow, conscious and rational cognitive processes. In the context of social media use, such as TikTok, the interaction between these two systems can trigger various forms of behavior, including moral disengagement. The intensity of TikTok use tends to trigger automatic processes stimulated by interesting content and social interactions, which ultimately pushes individuals into moral disengagement behavior. Self-control, while important, is not strong enough to inhibit the effects of these automatic processes.

The results of this study are also in line with previous research, which shows that self-control is only a helping factor, but not always sufficient to prevent harmful behavior (Nurhanifa, Widianti, and Yamin, 2020). The high intensity of TikTok use can lead to various types of social interactions that can trigger moral disengagement behavior, even when individual self-control is at an adequate level. This suggests that other more powerful and direct factors such as content, motivation, and social context play a major role in driving moral disengagement.

This research also draws on the moral reflection approach, which states that moral disengagement can be reduced through increased capacity for moral reflection and awareness of the social impact of behavior. The findings suggest that increasing self-control alone is not enough to reduce moral disengagement caused by social media use.

CONCLUSION

From the results of data analysis and discussion that has been described, several conclusions can be drawn that the results of the mediator analysis show the intensity of using tiktok and moral disengagement through self-control, obtained a value of $z = 0.875$ with a significance of $p = 0.382$ ($p > 0.05$). This means that the self-control variable is unable to mediate the effect of the intensity of using TikTok on moral disengagement. The analysis results show a direct relationship between self-control and moral disengagement, obtained a value of $z = 0.888$ with a significance of $p = 0.375$ ($p > 0.05$). This shows that self-control and moral disengagement do not have a significant relationship. The analysis results show a direct relationship between the intensity of using tiktok and moral disengagement, obtained a z value = 3.556 with a significance of $p = 0.001$ ($p < 0.05$). This shows that the

intensity of using tiktok with moral disengagement has a significant relationship. The analysis results show a direct relationship between the intensity of using TikTok and self-control, obtained a z value = 5.179 with a significance of $p = 0.001$ ($p < 0.05$). This shows that the intensity of using TikTok with self-control has a significant relationship.

The results of this study confirm that self-control has an important role in moderating the effect of the intensity of TikTok use on moral disengagement. Individuals with high self-control tend to be more able to resist the urge to follow norms that are contrary to the moral values they hold. Conversely, individuals with low self-control are more susceptible to the negative influence of the intensity of TikTok use, making it easier to experience moral disengagement. This suggests that self-control is not only a protective factor, but also an important indicator in understanding how individuals respond to influences from social media.

REFERENCES

- Astuti, E., and S. Andriani. 2021. "Intensitas Penggunaan Aplikasi Tiktok Terhadap Perilaku Imitasi Remaja." *Komunikologi: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Komunikasi* 18(2):134–36.
- Derianto, D., & Qorib, F. 2018. "Persepsi Mahasiswa Universitas Tribhuwana Tungadewi Malang Terhadap Penggunaan Aplikasi Tiktok." *Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Ilmu Politik* 7(2):77–83.
- Ghozali, Imam. 2018. *Aplikasi Analisis Multivariate Dengan Program IBM SPSS 25*. Semarang: Universitas Diponegoro.
- Gupta, A.K., Upreti, D., Shrestha, S., Sawant, S., Karki, U., & Shoib, S. 2021. "Adolescent-Parent Conflict in the Era of 'TikTok': Case Reports from Nepal." *Journal of Affective Disorders Reports* 6(3).
- Habsy, Bakhrudin All, Adhelia Caroline Sufiandi, Athallah Nadhif Baktiadi, and Eka Meylana Asmarani. 2023. "Teori Perkembangan Sosial Emosi Erikson Dan Perkembangan Moral Kohlberg." *Tsaqofah* 4(1):217–28. doi: 10.58578/tsaqofah.v4i1.2163.
- Kurnia, S., Sitasari, N. W., & Martin, S. 2020. "Kontrol Diri Dan Perilaku Phubbing Pada Remaja Di Jakarta." *Jurnal Psikologi: Media Ilmiah Psikologi* 18(1):58–67.
- Marsela, R.P., & Supriatna, M. 2019. "Kontrol Diri: Definisi Dan Faktor." *Journal of Innovative Counseling: Theory, Practice, and Research* 3(2):65–69.
- Mulyani, Indah, Indah Cahyanti, and Winny Puspasari Thamrin. 2024. "Peran Moral Disengagement Terhadap Perilaku Sexting Pada Remaja Yang Dimoderasi Oleh Jenis Kelamin." *Jurnal Psikologi Sosial* 22(02):127–34. doi: 10.7454/jps.2024.14.
- Nebioglu, M., Konuk, N., Akbaba, S., & Eroglu, Y. 2012. "The Investigation of Validity and Reliability of the Turkish Version of the Brief Self-Control Scale." *Bulletin of Clinical Psychopharmacology* 22(4):340–51.
- Nurhanifa, Aulia, Efri Widiandi, and Ahmad Yamin. 2020. "Kontrol Diri Dalam Penggunaan Media Sosial Pada Remaja." *Jurnal Ilmu Keperawatan Jiwa* 3(4):527–40.
- Paramithasari, P.P., & Dewi, E. K. 2023. "Hubungan Antara Kontrol Diri Dengan Pengungkapan Diri Di Jejaring Sosial Pada Siswa SMA Kesatrian 1 Semarang." *Jurnal Empati* 2(4).

- Puspitasari, Wulan, and Zulian Fikry. 2023. "Kontribusi Kontrol Diri Terhadap Kecanduan Media Sosial Tiktok Pada Remaja Di Kabupaten Bekasi." *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai* 7(2):13958–64. doi: 10.31004/jptam.v7i2.8611.
- Rahayuwati, L., Permana, R. H., & Labertha, A. 2019. "Pemutaran Video, Diskusi Dan Penggunaan Standing Banner Pada Siswa Untuk Mencegah Kecanduan Media Sosial." *Media Karya Kesehatan* 2(1).
- Rahmawati, Siti, Nurfadilah Nurfadilah, Andri Hadiansyah, and Vibby Salsabila Aditya. 2024. "Pengaruh Locus of Control Terhadap Moral Disengagement Pada Pengurus Organisasi Mahasiswa Di UAI." *JURNAL AI-AZHAR INDONESIA SERI HUMANIORA* 9(1):26. doi: 10.36722/sh.v9i1.2702.
- Rahmayani, M., Ramdahani, M. & Lubis, F. O. 2021. "Pengaruh Penggunaan Aplikasi TikTok Terhadap Perilaku Kecanduan Mahasiswa." *Syntax Literate; Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia* 6(7):3327–43.
- Sobel, M. E. 1982. "Asymptotic Confidence Intervals for Indirect Effects in Structural Equation Models." *Sociological Methodology* 13(290–312).
- Suryatmojo, H. D. 2019. "Pelajar Bengkulu Hina Palestina Di Medsos Dikeluarkan Dari Sekolah." *Antara*.
- Tangney, J. P., Baumeister, R. F., & Boone, A. L. 2014. "High Self-Control Predicts Good Adjustment, Less Pathology, Better Grades, and Interpersonal Success." *Journal of Personality* 72(2).
- Yanica, A. 2019. "Hubungan Antara Intensitas Penggunaan Media Sosial Dan Komunikasi Interpersonal Pada Remaja." *Jurnal Komunikasi Islam* 1(2):21–29.